



Republic of the Congo – Researched and compiled by the Refugee Documentation Centre of Ireland on 11 April 2013

Any information on Congolese police arresting and detaining individuals involved in protests in respect of the provision of financial aid to those impacted by an explosion at a munitions depot in Brazzaville on 4 March 2012.

An emergency message issued by the US embassy in Brazzaville on 26 March 2012 states:

“U.S. Embassy sources reported a protest in Brazzaville’s Talangai district. Protestors are discontent with the Government of the Republic of the Congo’s handling of indemnity payments to people who lost their homes in the March 4 explosions at the Regiment Blinde munitions depot. Embassy sources reported hearing gun shots at the site of the protest on Marien Ngouabi Avenue, near the Talangai Market. The protesters are expected to march to the Presidential Palace. U.S. citizens are advised to avoid the Talangai district and the area surrounding the Presidential Palace throughout the day.” (U.S. Embassy Brazzaville, Republic of the Congo (26 March 2012) *Emergency Message #6 for U.S. Citizens: Protests in Brazzaville’s Talangai district*)

An Agence France Presse report states:

“Congolese police used tear gas Monday to disperse hundreds of victims of a munitions dump blast who protested in the capital to demand the government pay them promised financial aid. The demonstrators were demanding immediate payment of a grant of three million CFA franc (5,000 euros) promised by the state after the March 4 blast that killed 223 people, wounded 2,300 and left more than 14,000 homeless. The protesters burnt tyres and overturned garbage cans in the streets, blocking traffic for a part of the morning. ‘We are protesting because nobody can find their name on the lists of beneficiaries,’ said 38-year-old protester Rock-Marien Ikama.” (Agence France Presse (26 March 2012) *Police use tear gas on protesting Congolese blast survivors*)

A Global Insight report states:

“Hundreds of demonstrators took to the streets of the Congolese capital, Brazzaville, yesterday (27 March) to protest against the government’s handling of the aftermath of a huge armoury blast that killed over 200 people on 4 March 2012. The protests were broken up by riot police using teargas amid burning tyres and streets littered with debris. According to participants cited by Agence France-Presse (AFP), the government’s perceived mishandling of promised damage payments to victims of the incident was the leading cause of the demonstrations.” (Global Insight (27 March 2012)

Congolese Security Forces Break Up Protests over Government Handling of Armoury Explosion)

References to the arrest or detention of participants in these protests were not found among sources available to the Research and Information Unit.

This response was prepared after researching publicly accessible information currently available to the Research and Information Unit within time constraints. This response is not and does not purport to be conclusive as to the merit of any particular claim to refugee status or asylum. Please read in full all documents referred to.

References:

Agence France Presse (26 March 2012) *Police use tear gas on protesting Congolese blast survivors*

<http://www.lexisnexis.com>

(Accessed 11 April 2013)

This is a subscription database

Global Insight (27 March 2012) *Congolese Security Forces Break Up Protests over Government Handling of Armoury Explosion*

<http://www.lexisnexis.com>

(Accessed 11 April 2013)

This is a subscription database

U.S. Embassy Brazzaville, Republic of the Congo (26 March 2012)

Emergency Message #6 for U.S. Citizens: Protests in Brazzaville's Talangai district

<http://photos.state.gov/libraries/congo/231771/PDFs/Emergency%20Message%206%20for%20US%20Citizens.pdf>

(Accessed 11 April 2013)

Sources Consulted:

All Africa (English-language version)

Amnesty International

BBC Monitoring

Electronic Immigration Network

European Country of Origin Information Network

Google

Human Rights Watch

IRIN News

Lexis Nexis

Refugee Documentation Centre Query Database

UNHCR Refworld

U.S. Embassy Brazzaville